



OESNEWS

Governor's Office of Emergency Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jaime Sarachit
MS&L/323/866-6018

Eric Lamoureux
OES/916/845-8400

First Lady of California Maria Shriver Helps Launch Major Statewide Disaster Preparedness Campaign Urging All Californians To "Be Ready!"

***Public and Private Partners Come Together to Support the
"Be Smart, Be Responsible, Be Prepared. Be Ready!" Year-long Initiative
Spearheaded by Governor's Office of Emergency Services***

LOS ANGELES (April 25, 2005) – Hundreds of volunteers from the American Red Cross, the California Service Corps and Fire Safe Councils, along with senior executives from some of California's largest corporations, gathered at a Vons store in Chatsworth today to hear First Lady of California Maria Shriver launch the first-ever, statewide disaster preparedness campaign with the call to action: "California! Be ready!"

Honorary Chairperson, Maria Shriver and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), launched the yearlong campaign called "Be Smart, Be Responsible, Be Prepared. Be Ready!" This first-of-its-kind campaign is a statewide public/private partnership that strives to inform all Californians about the urgent need to be disaster prepared. It also focuses on how Californians can be of service to their communities and neighborhoods by receiving disaster training or by volunteering for such non-profit organizations as the California Citizen Corps, the American Red Cross or local Fire Safe Councils statewide.

"Start building your family disaster plan now," said First Lady Maria Shriver. "We must all bear responsibility for our own safety, the safety of our families, our communities and our state. It's not a matter of if a disaster will strike; it's a matter of when. When you are ready, then California is too."

In an effort to underscore to the need for all Californians to be disaster prepared, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger declared May 2005 "Disaster Preparedness Month."

According to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, an estimated 70 percent of Californians are unprepared for a natural disaster or terrorist attack and less than 50 percent of households have a disaster supply kit. Whether it's the recent floods and winter storms or the ever-threatening wildfires and earthquakes, Maria Shriver is helping OES sound the alarm for Californians to be prepared. The centerpiece of the "Be Ready" campaign is a comprehensive tips brochure, endorsed by the First Lady, titled "10 Ways You Can Be Disaster Prepared" which will be available to Californians in multiple languages through the state and local county OES offices, and disseminated by a number

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of corporate partners. The “10 Ways” tips brochure is available for downloading at www.oes.ca.gov and www.firstlady.ca.gov.

Campaign Kick-Off and Classroom Visit:

Joining Shriver at the kick-off event to herald the first-ever disaster preparedness month in May, were Henry Renteria, director of OES, Marty Evans, president and CEO of the American Red Cross, and actors Jamie Lee Curtis, a disaster preparedness advocate, and Raven Symone, star of the Disney Channel's “That’s So Raven.” Symone is scheduled to appear in a TV public service announcement urging kids to be involved in family disaster planning. And also joining Maria Shriver were representatives of partners Safeway/Vons, SBC Communications, Enterprise, Allstate Insurance Company, Viacom, Target, and The Home Depot. Participants at today’s event discussed the importance of getting involved, giving blood, volunteering, and bearing responsibility for our state.

“California’s emergency personnel are the best in the country, but we still need individuals and families to help our emergency response teams by being trained and by being informed about what to do in the face of disaster,” said OES Director Henry Renteria in his opening remarks.

Marty Evans, representing the American Red Cross, also called for citizens to get involved: “It is critical that every Californian be encouraged to give blood, take CPR classes, join a community-based emergency preparedness organization such as Citizen Corps, educate their neighbors and get involved.”

To culminate the event and further demonstrate the importance of being prepared, the First Lady led a local family, Lourdes Marta and her 7-year-old son Marcel, through the aisles of Vons to shop for the essential supplies needed to create disaster kits for their home and car.

Prior to the campaign kick-off at Vons, the First Lady visited a classroom of second graders at Topeka Elementary School in Northridge, where she was joined by Lora Watts, president, external affairs at SBC, who announced a \$1 million grant from SBC to help fund a statewide disaster preparedness education lesson plan developed by Team SAFE-T (School and Family Emergency Training) in association with the American Red Cross. Twenty second graders presented the Maria Shriver, SBC and Team SAFE-T with a signed poster, pledging their commitment to be involved in family disaster planning.

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“Be Smart, Be Responsible, Be Prepared. Be Ready!”

Initial efforts include Safeway/Vons/Pavilions selling the American Red Cross Emergency Preparedness Starter Kits in all of its 550 California stores during the month of May; Enterprise and Allstate Insurance distributing the “10 Ways You Can Be Disaster Prepared” brochures and flyers in all of their statewide locations; a TV public service announcement, featuring the First Lady and produced by Viacom; and a print PSA campaign created and funded by Citibank, in conjunction with Viacom’s outdoor division that will appear on billboards throughout the state. Joining the efforts in June, The Home Depot will provide emergency disaster kits for purchase in all of its stores throughout the state. This September, Target stores will also make emergency preparedness kits available for families to purchase. In the fall, a PSA featuring Raven Symone and First Lady Maria Shriver will air on The Disney Channel to encourage kids to get involved in family disaster planning.

For additional disaster planning tips and information on the “Be Smart, Be Responsible, Be Prepared. Be Ready!” campaign, visit www.oes.ca.gov.

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